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THE COMPASSION AND BENEFICENCE OF
THE DEITY.

A SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE

THE SOCIETY INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE

SONS OF THE CLERGY OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH
OF SCOTLAND,

IN THE TRON CHURCH OF EDINBURGH, MAY, 20. 1796.

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BY

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UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

AN ACCOUNT OF THE OBJECTS AND CONSTITUTION OF
THE SOCIETY.

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THE COLLECTION AND PRESERVATION OF
THE ARTS

A JOURNAL

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THE SOCIETY INCORPORATED IN THE COUNTY OF
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**THE COMPASSION AND BENEFICENCE OF
THE DEITY,**

A SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE THE SOCIETY, &c.

JEREMIAH xlix. 11.

*Leave thy fatherless children ; I will preserve
them alive ; and let thy widows trust in me.*

NO subject is more open to general
observation, or more confirmed by
manifold experience, than the goodness
of God. The contemplation of the uni-
verse in which we dwell presents it per-
petually to our view. Amidst the vast

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extent

extent of creation, we discover no instance of mere pomp, or useless grandeur, but behold every thing contributing to the general good, and rendered subservient to the welfare of the rational or sensible world. In the administration of Providence, the same principle of beneficence is conspicuous. The seasons are made regularly to return, and the earth to flourish; supply is bountifully provided for the wants of all creatures; and numberless comforts are prepared to sweeten human life. Most justly is he who hath established, and who upholds, this admirable order of things, to be esteemed the Father of mercies: and, accordingly, in this view, he is often celebrated in scripture. *The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. His tender mercies are over all his works. His mercy is great unto the heavens; and it endureth for ever.*

It appears worthy of particular observation that there is one light, in which
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more frequently than in any other, the goodness of God is presented to us in the sacred writings, namely, the light of compassion to the distressed of mankind. Most of the situations are mentioned in which men are considered as most forlorn; and in some passage of scripture, God is represented as interesting himself, in a peculiar manner, for those who are in such situations. Particular emphasis is always laid upon this circumstance, in the general views which are given of his goodness. He is the *Hearer of prayer, unto whom all flesh shall come.* But he is described as listening with particular attention to the *cry of the poor; and regarding the prayer of the destitute: He will prepare their heart, and cause his ear to hear.* All creatures are the objects of his providential care. But *the widow and the fatherless, the bowed down and the broken in heart,* are particularly attended to, and commiserated by him. *The Lord executeth judgement*

ment for the oppressed; the Lord preserveth the stranger; he looseth the prisoner, and giveth food to the hungry. He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; nor hides he his face from them, but hears when they cry unto him *. In short, when we are deprived of all human consolation and aid, the Almighty is represented as then most accessible to our prayers, and most disposed to help and relieve us.

The words which I have chosen for the text afford a very amiable view of that compassion which scripture so often ascribes to the Supreme Being. The context in which they stand contains much dark and mysterious prophecy relating to nations in the neighbourhood of Judea, but leads to no particular illustration of the text. The words of it, taken by themselves,

* Pf. cii. 17. Pf. x. 17. Pf. lxxviii. 5. Pf. lxxix. 33. Pf. clxvi. 7. Pf. xxii. 24. &c. &c.

themselves, are plainly to be understood as spoken by God to an aged parent, who in the view of approaching dissolution, is anxious about the future condition of his family in the world; and they present a most affecting display of God's compassionate regard to the children of those who have been his faithful servants on earth. *Leave thy fatherless children; I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.*—It will be worthy of our attention at present, to enquire into the reasons why the Almighty is pleased to represent himself so often to us under this view; not only as the just and good Ruler of the universe, which is the first and leading idea we naturally form of him, but as the Patron and Friend of the distressed part of mankind.

It will be found that there are two very important purposes which such discoveries of the divine nature serve. First, they furnish particular ground for trust
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in God, amidst all the vicissitudes of human life; and next, they exhibit the pattern of that disposition, which we ought, in our measure, humbly to follow and imitate.

I. THE discoveries of divine compassion were purposely intended to furnish to us particular ground for trust in God, amidst all the vicissitudes of human life. Man, during his abode on earth, is exposed to various distresses. Even in his most flourishing state, his condition is extremely precarious. Prosperous as he may at one time seem to be, he cannot tell how soon, by some unforeseen vicissitude, he may be humbled to the dust; and still less can he tell what may in future befall his children, to whose fortunes he often looks with anxious solicitude. In the moments when his mind is oppressed, either by the immediate feeling of sorrows or by the dread of impending evils, it is natural

ral for him to fly to that Supreme Being, under whose direction all human events are placed, and earnestly to implore protection, from him.—But though he hold the belief that justice and goodness are ever to be found at the throne of the Almighty, yet, even there, particular discouragements meet him. For that Supreme Being to whom he looks up is a great and an awful Being. His nature is, to us, unknown. He dwells in the secret place of Eternity; and is surrounded with clouds and darkness. We hear his tremendous voice in the thunder; and in every commotion of the elements we behold the irresistible hand of his power. A nature so infinitely superior to our own cannot be looked up to without some measure of dismay. It is overwhelming to the timid apprehension of the distressed. It is contemplated with that awful and mysterious reverence which overpowers confidence and trust.

It is for this reason that, in condescension to human weakness, God has been pleased so often to represent himself as actuated by a principle of compassion and pity. This gives a shade and softening to the awful greatness of the Divinity. It brings down his goodness to the level of our conception, and fits it to be the object of our trust. Compassion is a principle which we all feel and know. We know that it is the strongest of all the benevolent instincts in our nature, and that it tends directly to interest us in behalf of those who need our aid. We are taught to believe that a similar attribute belongs to the divine nature; in order that, from that species of goodness which we are best acquainted with, and which we can most rely upon, we may be trained both to love our almighty Benefactor, and as long as we are in the practice of our duty, to trust to his protection, amidst every distress.

trials. When we hear such a voice of tenderness, as that which my text utters, proceeding from the Almighty, our hearts are comforted. Distrust and dismay are removed. We are no longer oppressed by his greatness. We can draw near to him as to a Father in heaven, before whom we can, with humble confidence, pour out our sorrows; and can trust that, though all our earthly friends should neglect us, our prayers will attract his compassionate regard.

Compassion, to the unfortunate, as it is exerted among men, is indeed accompanied with certain disturbed and painful feelings, arising from sympathy with those whom we pity. But every such feeling we must remove from our thoughts, when we ascribe an affection of this nature to the Deity. It is true, that, in scripture language, the divine compassion is sometimes figured by strong allusions to the relenting struggles and passionate meltings

of the human heart. But we easily perceive that such representations are to be understood with the allowances which figurative language requires. All that is amiable in compassion belongs to God; but all that is imperfect in it must be left to man. In the Supreme Being there can be no perturbation or uneasiness; no contrast of feelings, nor fluctuation of purpose. His compassion imports a kind regard to the circumstances of the unhappy. But still it is such a regard as suits the perfection of the great Governor of the universe; whose benignity, undisturbed by any violent emotion, ever maintains the same tranquil tenor, like the unruffled and uninterrupted serenity of the highest heavens.

It is important to observe, that this pity and compassion of our heavenly Father extends itself to our moral and spiritual concerns, in like manner as to our natural and external distresses. In that
great

great dispensation of the redemption of the world by his Son Jesus Christ, he is always represented in scripture as moved by pity for our fallen and wretched estate. The same principle which leads him to regard with compassion the widow and the fatherless, led him to look down with compassion on an helpless and forlorn race, degraded from their original honour. From infinite mercy he sent his Son to *seek and to save that which was lost.* According to the prophetic language of the Old Testament, *He looked upon us; and his time was a time of love. He saw that there was no man; He beheld that there was no intercessor, and his own arm brought salvation. He laid his help on one who was mighty to save. He saw us in our blood, and said, Live * —* Agreeable to this spirit of compassion, displayed in our redemption, is the whole dispensation

* Ezek. xvi. 8. Isaiah lix. 16.

penfation of divine grace towards man in his present state of infirmity. It fpeaks continually the doctrine of confolation and merciful aid; *grace to be fufficient for us, and ftrength to be made perfect in our weaknefs. As a father pitieth his children, fo the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are duft* *.

I cannot conclude this head without obferving how much it adds to the value of the Chriftian religion, that it hath difcovered the Deity to us in a light fo amiable. When the nations of the earth worfhipped a God unknown, or one whom they arrayed in nothing but vengeful thunders, the true God hath come forth from behind the cloud, and made himfelf known to us; known, not only as a juft and good Ruler, but as a compassionate Father, in whom, amidft all their diftreffes,

* 2 Cor. xii. 9. Pfal. ciii. 13.

treffes, the virtuous may trust and hope.
I now proceed to observe,

II. THAT such discoveries of the divine nature were designed, not only to administer encouragement and consolation, but also to exhibit the pattern of that disposition which we are bound, in our measure, to imitate and follow. To this purpose tend the repeated exhortations of scripture, *to be followers of God, as dear children; to be merciful as our Father in heaven is merciful.* That hardness of heart which renders men insensible to the distresses of their brethren, that insolence of prosperity which inspires them with contempt of those who are fallen below them, are always represented in scripture as dispositions most opposite to the nature of God, and most hateful in his sight. In order to make this appear in the strongest light, he hath turned his goodness chiefly into the channel of compassionate regard
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to those whom the selfish and the proud despise. He hath avowedly taken up their cause, that he might state himself as an antagonist to such as would bear them down ; that he might confound and put to the blush that arrogance of men which makes them slight any of their own brethren. *For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord, to set them in safety from him that puffeth at them* *. Lord, says the Psalmist, *thou hast heard the desire of the humble ; thou wilt arise to judge the fatherless, and the oppressed, that the man of earth may oppress no more* †.

Consider, I beseech you, whether any virtue can admit of a higher recommendation than its being that disposition under the character of which the Almighty chuses to be peculiarly known to us ? How can we claim any relation to the Father of mercies,

* Psal. xii. 5.

† Psal. x. 17, 18.

mercy, or how look up to him for compassion and grace, if we show no bowels of mercy, gentleness, and kindness, to one another?—The whole plan, indeed, on which he hath formed human nature, and all the circumstances in which he hath placed us on earth, are plainly contrived to excite affections of benevolence, and to enforce works of mercy. Not only hath he planted compassion in the human breast, as one of the strongest instincts there, but he hath so connected us in society, as necessarily to require that our benevolent instincts should be brought into exercise. For it is apparent that no man, in any rank of life, even the highest, is sufficient for his own well-being. He can neither supply his own wants, nor provide for his own comforts, without the co-operation of others. The dependence here is mutual between the high and the low, the rich and the poor. Each, in one way or other, calls on each for aid. All are so
linked

linked together, as to be impelled by a thousand motives to assist one another in the time of need. This is what nature, what society, what providence, all speak with a loud voice; a voice which may be said to have gone forth even to the ends of the earth, and to have been heard and understood by the most barbarous tribes of men. For among savage and uncultivated nations, no less than among the most civilized and polished, the energy of compassion is felt, and its claims are recognised and obeyed.

In the course of human life, innumerable occasions present themselves for all the exercises of that humanity and benignity, to which we are so powerfully prompted. The diversities of rank among men, the changes of fortune to which all, in every rank, are liable, the necessities of the poor, the wants of helpless youth, the infirmities of declining age, are always giving opportunities for the display of humane affections.

fections. There is perhaps no form in
 which benevolence appears more interest-
 ing, than when it is employed in providing
 relief for the families and children of those
 who stand in need of aid, in order that the
 young may be trained up by proper edu-
 cation for acting an useful part in the
 world. Benefits conveyed by this chan-
 nel are often more important than any o-
 ther acts of liberality. Besides the great
 advantage which they bring to society,
 they have the pleasing effect of awakening
 all the virtuous sensibilities of the heart,
 both in those who confer, and in those who
 receive them. They are often felt with a
 warmer relish by a family in distress, and
 productive of more tender gratitude, than
 could have been raised by any other mode
 of beneficence. This is rendered sensible
 to every heart by that beautiful ex-
 pression of the divine compassion in the
 text; *Leave thy fatherless children; I will*
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preserve them alive ; and let thy widows trust in me.

By the train of sentiment we have pursued, your thoughts, my brethren, will now be naturally led to the consideration of that institution which has given occasion to the meeting of this day ; *The Society formed for the benefit of the Sons of the Clergy of the Established church of Scotland.*

In entering on this part of the subject, I trust that I may be permitted to say a few words concerning that order of men, in behalf of whose descendents the favour of the public is now requested. Though belonging myself to that order, yet as my advanced age and long experience may reasonably be supposed to have corrected the prejudices and cooled the ardour of partiality, some weight, I hope, will be allowed to my testimony ; when now, in the fifty-fourth year of my ministry, after having seen successions of ministers, in various
parts

parts of the country rise and fall, and after long acquaintance with many, of divided sentiments, among my brethren, I can with confidence declare it as my opinion, that there exists not any where a more respectable and useful class of men than the Clergy of the Church of Scotland. Among such a numerous body, I readily admit that some exceptions will be found to the character which I now give of them. Considering human frailty, this is no more than was naturally to be expected. But, taking the ministers of this church in general, I can venture to assert that they are a well-informed and enlightened set of men; decent and irreproachable in their behaviour, conscientious in the discharge of their pastoral duties, and very generally esteemed by the people under their care. There was a time, when the Presbyterian clergy lay under the imputation of being sour in their tempers, narrow in their opinions, severe

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and intolerant in their principles. But as, together with the diffusion of knowledge, a more liberal spirit has pervaded the clerical order in this part of Britain, it will be found that their manners now are conciliating; that they study to promote harmony and good order in their parishes; that they have shown themselves addicted to useful literature, and in several branches of it have eminently distinguished themselves; and that while they are edifying and consolatory to the lowest, they have acquired just respect from the higher classes of men.

As long, therefore, as this country shall be preserved from the contagion of that false philosophy which, by overthrowing all religious establishments, has engendered so much impiety, and wrought so much mischief, in a neighbouring land; as long as the existence of Christian faith, and of religious principles, shall be considered as essential to the welfare of a nation, it may reasonably

reasonably, I think, be expected, that such a body of men as I have mentioned shall be held entitled to the regard and good will of their fellow citizens and countrymen.

Circumstances there are, which give particular occasion for this regard and good will to be called forth. You all know the nature of that provision which is made by the public for the established clergy of this country. It is such as is suited to that sober and frugal manner of living which is expected from ministers of the gospel. Though, in consideration of the growing prosperity of the country, and of its natural consequence, the increased rate of every expence, it has been found reasonable that, of late years, some addition should be made to the provision of many of the ministers, yet still their condition approaches not to what can be termed opulence in any degree. It is such as to raise them above contempt; such as to afford a decent
 subsistence

subsistence for themselves and their families ; but such as seldom or never can enable them, without some other sources of revenue, to make provision for their children when going forth into the world, especially if their family be numerous.

It was the consideration of this circumstance that lately gave rise to the Society in favour of the Sons of the Clergy. Many a minister who, for a tract of years, has faithfully laboured in the discharge of every duty to his flock, has felt, towards the close of his days, what a blessing it would have proved to him, if such a society had existed in his time, to which he could have looked for aid.—Represent to yourselves, my friends, one of this character,—and the representation which I am now to give is not the work of fancy, but founded upon what often in fact takes place.—Figure, I say, a worthy clergyman, now in the decline of life, foreseeing the end of his labours drawing near, surrounded

rounded with a family of children, to whom his chief care had been devoted, and and in whom his heart had long been bound up. Their education, from their earliest years, he had conducted, or at least superintended himself, with paternal fondness. Whatever his scanty stores could afford he had cheerfully expended, in giving all the advantage to their education which his own village, or which the nearest county town could yield. He had made every preparation that was in his power to make, for their acting a proper part in future life. But the time of preparation is finished. The gay season of childhood is over. The period is arrived when they must go forth; must leave that paternal mansion where, in the midst of their youthful companions, they had spent many happy days; must go to provide for themselves, the best they can, in a world which to them is unknown. And whether are they to go?—Of the few friends

friends their father ever had, some are now gone gone down to the dust. Others, with whom he once lived in familiar intimacy, lifted up now with the pride of opulence, have forgotten him and his family. One of his sons, at least, he fondly wished to have educated for that profession to which he himself had been so long attached. But, living at a distance from any of the seats of learning, and having no protector to whose assistance he could look, he feels with regret that he is unable for the attempt. Some of his children he must send away to seek their fortune in a distant land. Others must be consigned to the dangers of the ocean, or be reduced to gain their bread by following some of the mean and laborious occupations of life. Viewing the dark and discouraging prospect that is before them, the father's heart is sore, when he bids adieu to his children. With tears in his eyes, he gives them his blessing as they depart. Little more it is in
his

his power to give them ; but he commits them to the protection of their Father's God.—How happy, if, in these mournful moments, a voice of such a nature as this could reach his ears ; *Leave thy fatherless children ; I will preserve them alive ; and let thy widows trust in me !*

ANIMATED by the desire of imitating that spirit of divine compassion which breathes in these words, a few respectable gentlemen in this city formed, six years ago, the plan of a Society for assisting the Sons of the Clergy. The institution, as soon as it was known, met with public approbation and favour. It was early distinguished, and amply assisted by Royal munificence. It was incorporated by Royal charter ; and through the generosity of the public, has prospered so far, that the Society has already been enabled to give aid to a considerable number of the sons of clergymen of this church.

The aid which the Society, in an infant state, could as yet give, has been small; as it is confined to what the interest of their capital allows them to bestow. They earnestly wish to become more effectually useful, by enlarging their provision for the education of Sons; and hope to be enabled, in due time, to give assistance to the Daughters as well as to the Sons of ministers; so as to afford comfort to a widowed mother, and to the whole of a disconsolate family. For, it is to be observed, that it is not merely to a literary education, or to preparation for the church, that the intentions of the Society are directed. They mean so to apply their beneficence, that the families of ministers may be assisted to acquire the necessary qualifications for pursuing any useful employment in the world, for which they appear to be most fitted.

Among other inducements which may encourage the public to promote this beneficent plan, there is one which I cannot, on this

this occasion, omit to mention; that is, the signal success with which many sons of Scots clergymen have been blessed, in filling with honour several of the important departments of Society. As I have not myself the honour of belonging to that class, I can speak with more freedom on this topic than some other of my brethren. Not to mention the well known and distinguished names of several who at present possess, with much dignity, stations in the church, and chairs in the universities, and some, now gone, who will be long remembered as having done no small honour, by their literary productions, to this part of the island; let me desire you to look round on the most respectable stations of busy life, and to consider how many of those who now make a high figure at the bar, some on the bench, many in the commercial, the military, and the naval professions, were born and bred under the humble roof of a minister.—Nor is this success

to be ascribed to any favourable coincidence of circumstances at this time more than any other. It is the natural result of the manner in which they were brought up. Educated in good principles, and formed to sober manners, by pious and virtuous parents, they enter on the world less tainted than others by fashionable vices and follies. By the situation of their parents they were inured, from their earliest youth, to temperance and habits of application. They come forward, not altogether ignorant and unlettered, like the children of the meaner classes of men, but with the foundations of good education and useful knowledge. At the same time, they see and know that it is not to fortune and to friends, but to their own industry and exertions, they must trust for future success; and that only according to the opinion entertained of their merit, they can hope to be patronized by others. Hence it comes to pass that young persons

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of this description often advance themselves more quickly, and act their part more successfully than others who, from their birth and fortune, have enjoyed the benefits of a more improved and ornamented education; but whose opulence sometimes supercedes labour, encourages indolence, and perhaps fosters dissipation and love of pleasure.

These are considerations which tend to bespeak public favour in behalf of the institution which I now recommend. Consider, my friends, that by befriending and assisting it, you contribute to bring forward a new race, who, like those of the same rank that have gone before them, may come, in their day, to be beneficial to their country and to the world. It must not be forgotten, that assistance to bring them forward becomes now more necessary than it was to the former race, in consequence of the great additional expence which is well known now to attend every

every part of education. By seasonable generosity, on this occasion, you may be ripening in secret the seeds of future genius ; you may be bringing forward to maturity those young plants which shall flourish hereafter in the land ; and which may perhaps attain such strength, and rise to such a height, as to protect others under their shade.

To the honour of the present age, it must be acknowledged not to be deficient in a spirit of humanity. Frequent instances both of public and private beneficence come forth on every proper occasion. In this city, many a noble monument appears of charitable foundations and institutions ; some destined to educate the children of the needy ; others to furnish maintenance for the poor, to provide for the aged, or to receive and relieve the sick and the distressed. By their means much timely succour is given, and many a distress is mitigated. The institution for the sake of
which

which we are now assembled, partaking of the same beneyolent spirit with the others, reaches to a more respectable class of men, and aims at a more extensive object. Its purpose is, to prevent those evils which would arise to the public, from the children of worthy parents being left to languish in that hopeless indigence which throws them first as a burden on society, and may afterwards render them a dangerous nuisance to it. Instead of this, it aims at bringing them into such a state as affords a reasonable prospect of their proving useful members of the community, and perhaps of their ranking among its ornaments and supports.

So good a design Providence has already begun to favour, and we hope will continue to bless. After we are laid in the dust, the generation that succeeds us may experience its happy effects. They who now contribute by their generosity to carry it forward will, in the mean time, enjoy

enjoy the satisfaction of having adopted the benevolent spirit of the Christian religion. They will enjoy the satisfaction of having imitated, as they could, that compassion of our heavenly Father which, in so affecting a manner, is expressed by the words of the text ; words, which I hope will continue to dwell, with a lasting and tender impression, on all our hearts ; *Leave thy fatherless children ; I will preserve them alive ; and let thy widows trust in me !*

F I N I S.

ACCOUNT
OF THE
SOCIETY
INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER,
FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE
SONS OF THE CLERGY OF THE ESTABLISHED
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

With a State of its Proceedings, till May 1796.

THE views upon which the Society for the benefit of the Sons of the Clergy of the Church of Scotland was instituted, and the objects it is designed to embrace, have been so repeatedly laid before the public in detail, that, on the present occasion, it will be sufficient barely to mention them.

It is a fact well known, and universally allowed, that the Ecclesiastical Establishment of North Britain, while it provides the best securities

ties for the character, the conduct, the professional abilities, and the usefulness of its ministers, is supported at the same time at an expence comparatively smaller than that of any other established church in Europe. The incomes of the Scotch ministers have always been extremely moderate; and, of late years, from the increased expence, and different mode of living, have unavoidably fallen greatly below the value which they bore in the earlier periods of this century. The change is felt in every part of domestic concern, and particularly affects the ability of many to meet the expence necessary for procuring to their children an education suited to their situation, their rank in life, and the prospects they may reasonably entertain. At the same time, it will be generally allowed, that, from the advantageous means which the children of clergymen necessarily possess for receiving in early life the rudiments of liberal knowledge and impressions of virtue, it must be for the interest of the public, that young men of this class should have access to such an education as may fit them for the exercise of those professions to which their abilities and inclinations direct them, and may enable them to come forward with success and credit in society.

With

With a view to afford that aid, both in respect of patronage and pecuniary supply, without which, this object, however important, might sometimes be unattainable by the families of the most deserving clergymen, the SOCIETY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE SONS OF THE CLERGY was originally instituted; its views are not confined to any one district of the country, nor limited to the candidates for the church; it comprehends every part of Scotland alike, and the sons of the clergy, whatever profession they propose to embrace; and its benefits, though at present necessarily limited to the Sons, are meant to be extended to the Daughters of clergymen, as soon as the funds will admit.

The CONSTITUTION of the Society has been formed after mature deliberation, with a view to secure at once regularity in the management of the business, and impartiality in the distribution of the funds. Three different bodies are recognized and invested with certain powers in the conduct of the institution;—the *Society*, the *Subscribers*, the *Committee of Management*.

1st, The *Society*. This body consists of the Original Founders of the Society, and other Gentlemen

Gentlemen elected by ballot from the list of Subscribers. To it are confided the management of the capital stock, in respect of loans and securities, the receipt and disbursement of money, the general charge of the interest of the scheme, the nomination of the Officers of the Society, and the review of the reports of the Committee of Management, one half of whom are likewise elected by it.

2dly, The *Subscribers at large*, who meet on a day previously intimated, after an annual sermon. The accounts of the Society, both in the receipt and expenditure, are laid before them; and the subscribers are invited to nominate from among their own number their proportion of the Committee of Management, without being limited in their choice to such as are, or such as are not, members of the Society. If the choice falls on any of the latter description, they become, in virtue of this nomination, members of the Society during the term of their continuance in the Committee. Every Subscriber, to the amount of three guineas or upwards, has a voice in the general annual meeting.

3dly, The *Committee of Management*, which
consists

consists of nine Gentlemen ; four chosen by the Society, four by the Meeting of the Subscribers, not members of the society, and the President of the Society for the year, in virtue of his office. A new President is annually chosen ; the other Members of the Committee hold their places for four years, and no Gentleman is a second time eligible, till five years after he has ceased to be a member. Before this Committee the applications for assistance are to be laid, and the claims of preference discussed ; and by them the sums proper to be granted in each case, are in the first instance specified and reported to the Society, by whom they are either altered or confirmed.

By this system of regulation and controul, the public must ever have the best security which the nature of the case can admit, for attention, integrity, impartiality, and fidelity, in the management of the funds and conducting the business of the institution.

The Society was instituted in February 1790, and a numerous and respectable list of Subscribers to its funds gave the most satisfactory evidence of the general approbation of the design. The first general meeting of the Society and Subscribers was held in the Merchants' Hall,
Edin-

Edinburgh, on the 31st of May 1791, when the flock of the Society amounted to L. 1005. In January 1792, His Majesty was pleased to grant a Royal Charter, constituting the Society into a legal corporation, by the style and title of "The Society for the Benefit of the Sons of the Clergy of the Established Church of Scotland." This charter, by enabling the Society to hold property, and to receive legacies, bequests, and donations, will, it is hoped, contribute very effectually to render the advantages of the institution permanent and certain.

To the generous support of the public, was added in Feb. 1793, a liberal donation of L. 2000 from His Majesty. The funds of the institution were thus raised so far, that the Society found themselves able immediately to begin their operations, by allowing a temporary aid to six young men, who appeared to be proper objects of the Society's attention. That number was increased to 13 at the annual distribution for 1793, and next year 21 were received upon the list; the sums allotted to whom amounted in all to L. 120. At the annual distribution for the year, commencing Nov. 1795, the sums allotted amounted to L. 150; and the number of young men
assisted

assisted thereby was 25 *. The Society did not, however, confine their aid to pecuniary supply, but, in several instances, had the satisfaction of being able to obtain for the young men under their charge such respectable patronage as promises to be of essential utility to their future success in life.

The state of the funds, as reported at the annual General Meeting in May, stood thus:

Money lent on Heritable Bond	L. 4000	0	0
Money lodged in the Royal Bank	654	1	9
Subscriptions not paid up	50	10	0
Collection at Church door	36	3	1
Contributions received at the Meeting after the Sermon	28	7	0
	<hr/>		
	L. 4769	1	10
	The		

* The Society are restricted by the terms of their charter, and their laws, from encroaching on their capital; it is the revenue only of their stock which they can employ for the purposes of the institution. All donations and bequests must be applied to increase the capital, unless specially destined by the donor to be otherwise appropriated. It is always optional, however, to donors to direct the application of the sums bestowed, in any mode they incline, either for immediate distribution to the usual objects of the Society, for assistance to the daughters of clergymen, or for any other special purpose, connected with the design of the Society, and consistent with the spirit of its institution.

The Society, at this Meeting made choice of the Honourable Mr Baron Norton, as President for the ensuing year, re-elected all the other officers of the Society, and nominated Mr John Bonar, Solicitor of Excise, a member of the Committee of Management, in room of Mr John Gloag, who went out in rotation. The meeting of Subscribers, on the same day made choice of the Reverend Professor Finlayson, as a member of the Committee, in room of the Reverend Dr Davidson, who also retired in rotation.

The officers of the Society, therefore, and the Committee of Management, for the current year, consist of the following Gentlemen :

The Honourable Mr Baron Norton, President of the Society.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT.

From the Society.

Rev'd. Dr Hardy,	}	Ministers of Edin.
Rev'd. Dr Grieve,		
William Robertson, Esq. Advocate.		
John Bonar Esq. Solicitor of Excise.		

From

From the Subscribers.

Mr John Bell, Bookseller in Edin.
Mr Hugh Corrie, Clerk to the Signet,
Thomas Elder, Esq. Postmaster General for Scotland.
Revd. James Finlayson, one of the Ministers of Edin.

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY.

Mr Alex. Bonar, Banker in Edin. Treasurer.
Mr William Creech, Bookseller in Edin. Secretary.
Mr James Bonar, of the Excise-Office, Edin. Assistant Secretary.

L I S T

OF THE

MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY.

Those marked thus *, are Sons of Ministers.

Honourable Mr Baron Norton, PRESIDENT

- * Mr Robert Forrester, Banker
- * Mr John Gloag, Merchant
- * Mr William Creech, Bookseller

F

* Mr

- * Mr Andrew Bonar, Banker
- * Mr Alex. Bonar, Banker
- * Mr William Robertson, Advocate
- * Revd. Sir Henry Moncrieff-Welwood, Bart.
- * Revd. Dr Thomas Hardy
- * Revd. Dr William Gloag
- Revd. Dr Henry Grieve
- Sir James Stirling, Bart.
- * Revd. Robert Walker
- * Robert Blair, Esq. Solicitor General
- * Lord Craig
- * Mr Neil Ferguson, Advocate
- * Mr John Bonar, Solicitor of Excise
- * Mr George Cuming, Clerk to the Signet
- Honourable Henry Erskine, Advocate
- William Ramsay, Esq. of Barnton
- * Professor Dugald Stewart
- * James Hamilton, M. D. Edin.
- Right Honourable Henry Dundas, one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State
- Right Honourable Robert Dundas, Lord Advocate
- Mr John Tawfe, Writer
- Mr William Simpson, Cashier to the Royal Bank
- Sir William Forbes, Bart.
- Mr George Kinnear, Banker
- * Mr Achibald Gibson, Clerk to the Signet
- * Mr Adam Rolland, Clerk to the Signet
- Mr William Kerr, Secretary to the Post-Office
- Duke of Buccleugh
- * Professor John Hill
- Sir John Sinclair, Bart.

- Mr John Spottiswood, Solicitor, London
Lord Meadowbank
Professior Andrew Dalzel
- * Revd. Dr Alexander Carlyle
 - * Dr Adam Ferguson
 - * Revd. Mr Moodie
 - * Sir John Macpherson, Bart.
 - * Maxwell Gartshore, M. D.
William Gartshore, Esq. M. P. London
Right Honourable Hay Campbell, Lord President of
the Court of Session
 - * Mr James Bonar, Excise-Office
 - * Revd. Dr Thomas Davidson
 - * Mr John Bell, Bookfeller
Mr Hugh Corrie, Clerk to the Signet
Thomas Elder, Esq. Postmaster-General for Scotland
 - * Mr Alexander Young, Clerk to the Signet
Mr Mathew Sandelands, Clerk to the Signet
 - * Mr Robert Dundas, Clerk to the Signet
 - * John Petrie, from East Indies
Patrick Brydone, of Lennelhouse
Revd. Dr Hugh Blair
Revd. Professior Finlayson

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are received by

Messrs Mansfield, Ramsay, and Co. Edin.

Sir William Forbes, Hunter, and Co. do.

Sir Henry Moncrieff Wellwood, Bart. do.

Mr John Gloag, do.

Mr William Creech, do.

Or by the ministers of presbytery seats
throughout Scotland.

The money subscribed is to be paid to Mr
Alexander Bonar, treasurer to the Society, at
the Banking-house of Messrs Mansfield, Ram-
say, and Co. Edin.

In London, subscriptions will be received by
Messrs. Coutts and Co. in the Strand. Mr Ca-
dell in the Strand. Sir Robert Herris, St James
Street. Messrs. William Fuller, Son, and Chattris,
Lombard-Street; and the Revd. Dr Trotter,
Knights-Bridge.

N. B. Legacies or bequests to this Society
may be expressed in the following terms.—

“ Item, I give and bequeath to the Society for
“ the Benefit of the Sons of the Clergy of the
“ Established Church of Scotland, incorporated
“ by Royal Charter, the sum of,” &c.

F I N I S.

